

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of producing a silica gel by hydrolyzing a silicon alkoxide and subjecting the resulting hydrogel to a hydrothermal treatment substantially without aging it is described. Also described is a silica gel produced by such a method and a 5 silica gel which has the following characteristics:

- (a) the pore volume is from 0.6 to 1.6 ml/g,
- (b) the specific surface area is from 300 to 900 m²/g,
- (c) the mode diameter (D_{max}) of pores is less than 20 nm,
- (d) the volume of pores having diameters within $\pm 20\%$ of D_{max} is at least 10 50% of the total pore volume,
- (e) it is amorphous, and
- (f) the content of metal impurities is at most 500 ppm.